48. MEXICO
49. CANADA
50. BAHAMAS
51. KENYA
52. NIGERIA
53. MAURITIUS
54. SENEGAL
55. SEYCHELLES
56. UGANDA
57. ZIMBABWE
58. TANZANIA
59. GUYANA
60. GHANA
61. BAHARAIN
62. OMAN
63. SAUDI ARABIA
64. JORDAN
65. U.A.E.
66. EGYPT
67. IRAN
68. ISRAEL
69. KUWAIT

Meetings of India and Saudi Arabia Joint Commission

7616. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) how many meetings of India and Saudi Arabia Joint Commission have been held;

(b) what are the areas of cooperation in trade agreed between the two countries; and

(c) whether the exports to Saudi Arabia have improved after the meetings of the Joint Commission?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) So far the India-Saudi Arabia Joint Commission has held 4 meetings.

(b) At the 4th meeting of the Joint Commission, held in December 1994, the two countries explored the following areas for bilateral trade and promotion; export of bovine meet, marine products, and pharmaceutical to Saudi Arabia; export of Saudi petroleum and petro-chemical products in increased quantities, lubricants and base oils, and other high quality Saudi products to India; coope ration between trade and industrial or ganisations of the two countries; exten sion of port facilities; and mutual participation in trade fairs etc.

(c) The exports to Saudi Arabia have been growing continuously. For exam ple, the export figure in 1986-87 was Rs. 213.56 crore, which rose to Rs. 965.17 crore in 1991-92, and to Rs. 1600.04 crore in 1993-94.

Overinvoicing by exporters

7617. SHRI MOHAMMED AFZAL alias MEEM AFZAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state;

(a) whether it is a fact that a section of exporters are indulging in overinvoicing to bring back the foreign exchange that is deposited clandestinely in foreign banks; and

(b) if so, what are the preventive measures taken to counter this device which encourages clandestine havala market?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): *(a)* and (b) Although reports of misuse of Value Based Advance Licence (VABAL-) Scheme during 1994-95 by over-invoicing of exports and use of Havala transactions were received, in-vestigations have failed to stablish widespread misuse of the Scheme. The In-forcement Directcrate in the Ministry of Finance have reported that only one case of this nature has been estalished. In this case, action under the provisions of

the Foreign Exchange Regulation Act (FERA) has been taken and sanction for prosecution has been issued. The defaulting exporter has also been detained under the Conservation of Foreign Exchange and prevention of Smuggling Activities (COFEPOSA) Act.

In the Export-Import Policy for 1995-96, the Value Based Advance Licences have been made subject to additional Customs duty with corresponding Modvat Drawback benefits.

This is expected to discourage misuse of VABAL Scheme. Further the Enforcement Directorate in the Ministry of Finance keeps a close vigil to prevent Hawala transactions and takes severe action against offenders, under the provisions of FERA and COFEPOSA.

Export of books newspapers and magazines

7618. SHRI MOHAMMED AFZAL alias MEEM AFZAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state the value of books, Newspapers and Maga zines etc., exported during the year 1994-95?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): The value of books, newspapers and magazines etc exported during the year 1994-95 is estimated at Rs. 89 crors.

(Source: Chamicals & Allied Products Export Promotion Council)

News) letters on dumping by FICCI

7619. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of COM MERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the newsitem captioned "FICCI urged to issue quartely on dumping as reported in the Pioneer dated 20th April, 1995;

(b) if so, whether Government have asked FICCI to bring out a quarterly newsletter on developments relating to dumping of goods;

(c) if so, whether Government have failed to keep a check on dumping of goods; and

(d) if so, the facts and details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In a seminar on Anti-Dumping organised by FICCI, it was suggested that a quartely newsletter could be brought out by FICCI highlighting the details of anti-dumping cases worldwide in order to spread awareness amongst the industry.

(c) and (d) In the Ministry of Commerce appropriate machinery exists with the Designated Authority to receive and examine complaints relating to dumping of goods in India. Petitions received by the Authority from the domestic industry, are examined and wherever warranted anti-dumping duty has alo been recommended and levied.

Boosting trade ties with Russia

7620. SHRI BHAGABAN MAJHI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Russia has expressed its desire to boost trade ties with India;

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto;

(c) the areas identified for the expansion of Indo-Russian trade; and

(d) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government of India and the Government of Russia have the desire to boost trade ties. Various measures for promoting bilateral trade and economic cooperation have been undertaken by the Government which include:—

— Promotion of dialogue with the Russian side including at the highest level.

— activation of the Joint Commission mechanism with its working group on Trade and Economic Coopera tion and Sub group on Transport which have met separately to dis cuss the entire gamut of bilateral economic relations.